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C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAKA 002618

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/06/2015

TAGS: PHUM PREL BG

SUBJECT: STAFFDEL MEETS WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY

Classified By: Pol/Econ Counselor D.C. McCullough; reason 1.4(b, d)

¶1. (SBU) On June 4, HIRC staff member Jamie McCormick and poloff met, at MFA's request, for 45 minutes with Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin.

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¶2. (C) After discussing the historically positive relations between Bangladesh and the U.S., McCormick noted the growing concern in the U.S. over human rights abuses in Bangladesh and the sources of funding and firearms for various groups in Bangladesh. Hemayetuddin responded with repeated assertions that "Bangladesh is not perfect" but that minorities enjoy full freedom and protection. Moreover, he said, Bangladesh has never had a history of communal violence "like its neighbors." Additionally, the Foreign Secretary maintained there are no groups in Bangladesh tied to international terrorist groups and that groups that practice violence are immediately banned upon discovery.

¶3. (SBU) Hemayetuddin then escorted McCormick for a brief session with Foreign Minister Morshed Khan. No substantive issues were discussed.

¶4. (U) This message was drafted after McCormick departed Bangladesh.

THOMAS